



Tuesday, October 31, was a real treat with no tricks as a group of interested citizens and health care partners met with State Health Commissioner Judith A. Monroe, M.D. at Parkview Huntington Hospital in Huntington, Indiana for the District 3 Obesity Summit.

The 15 attendees came together to learn about the latest efforts to improve nutritional intake and increase physical activity among the citizens in the 11 county area. Dr. Monroe welcomed the group and provided the latest statistics regarding Hoosier health. She presented graphs which depicted how counties in District 3 compare to the state and the nation in relation to obesity, tobacco use, eating the recommended number of fruits and vegetables, and physical activity.

In addition to Dr. Monroe's discussion, attendees also had the opportunity to learn about the Employee, Community, and Corporate Wellness Programs sponsored by DeKalb Memorial Hospital. Andrea Bales, DeKalb's Wellness Program Manager explained they have three targeted groups – hospital employees, the community at large and corporations. Hospital employees are allowed flex time and release time to take advantage of various exercise programs, screenings, and monitoring of blood sugars and blood pressures.

For the community component, DeKalb Memorial publishes a web-based newsletter. Corporations are provided health risk appraisal services and wellness audits.

Following Andrea's discussion, John Stead, Executive Director, Caylor-Nickel Foundation discussed Operation Wellness. John described how Caylor-Nickel Foundation, through a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant, developed a partnership with Ball State University to work with local schools. They have developed senior citizen programs, mileage clubs, Wellness University courses for high schools, and write regular newspaper columns on wellness. John indicated that keeping adults engaged is their on-going challenge.

A stimulating discussion concluded the summit with questions on researching why there is an overweight problem in Indiana and how to accomplish No Smoking policies in all schools.